

November 24, 1949

Claremont Man Killed In Highway Accident

Webster. — Three Claremont men were injured, one fatally, when the car in which they were driving to Webster, after a fishing trip to the lakes, ran into a Day county highway motor patrol on the Roslyn road about 5:30 Tuesday evening.

Hjalmer Lilja, 50, who suffered a fractured skull and severe cuts in the throat when he was thrown through the windshield of the car, passed away at 4:45 Wednesday afternoon at the Peabody Memorial Hospital, where he was brought following the accident. He had lost considerable blood before he reached the hospital and never recovered consciousness.

Lilja's two companions also sustained injuries, but were released Tuesday evening after treatment at the Peabody Clinic. Paul Sindt, the driver, received chest injuries and a cut on the forehead. Percy Benedict suffered broken ribs.

The accident occurred near the Swanson school house, seven miles north of Webster. Having been to the lakes, the men had returned by way of Grenville, where they made a business call and then set out for Webster.

The car they were driving was a 1939 Dodge, borrowed from the Mahlen Motors of Webster, while their own car, a Pontiac, was being serviced that afternoon at the Mahlen Garage.

The Dodge was damaged virtually beyond repair when it crashed, head-on, into the left front wheel of the heavy motor patrol. The bumper and radiator were smashed, the motor pushed backward, the windshield broken, frame sprung and other damage done. The motor patrol was unscathed and its driver, Virgil Olson, Roslyn, was unhurt.

The motor patrol, going north toward Roslyn, was blading the west side of the highway when the car, coming south on the same side of the road, crashed into it. Olson claims to have blinked the lights on the grader as the car approached.—Reporter and Farmer.